CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently amended)   A method, comprising:

receiving, ~~at~~ via a gaming device, a wager for initiating a game play of a game,

wherein the game play comprises a predetermined number of rounds of the game and the wager is an amount sufficient to pre-pay for the predetermined number of rounds;

establishing, in response to the wager, an initial balance of winnings via the gaming device,

wherein the initial balance of winnings is greater than the amount of the wager;

determining, via the gaming device, a predetermined number of outcomes, the predetermined number of outcomes comprising at least one respective outcome for each of the predetermined number of rounds;

adjusting, via the gaming device, the initial balance of winnings based on at least one of the determined outcomes, thereby determining a current balance of winnings,

wherein at least one of the outcomes causes the current balance of winnings to be less than the initial balance of winnings;

determining, via the gaming device after a predetermined subset of the predetermined number of rounds has been concluded, a final balance of winnings based on the current balance of winnings at the time after the predetermined subset of the predetermined number of rounds; and

providing, via the gaming device, the final balance of winnings to a player who initiated the game play.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the player is unable to cash out the current balance of winnings until after the predetermined number of rounds has been concluded.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein providing the final balance of winnings comprises:

adding the final balance of winnings to a credit meter balance of the gaming device.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

establishing, based on the wager, a credit meter balance that is distinct from the initial balance of winnings.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the initial balance of winnings is established prior to any outcome being determined.

6. (Currently amended)   The method of claim 1, wherein adjusting the initial balance of winnings comprises:

    determining an outcome of the predetermined number of outcomes;

    determining an effect on the game play corresponding to the outcome; or

    applying the effect to the game play.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein an effect on the game play comprises an effect on a current balance of winnings that corresponds to the outcome, and
wherein applying the effect to the game play comprises applying the effect to the current balance of winnings.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising:

    accessing a database that stores a plurality of obtainable outcomes, each of the obtainable outcomes corresponding to a respective effect on the game play.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

    automatically initiating each round of the predetermined rounds, without further input to do so from the player.

10. (Original)   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

    initiating each round of the predetermined number of rounds based on a command to do so from the player.

11. (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the outcomes of the predetermined number of outcomes comprises an outcome that grants a privilege to the player.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the privilege comprises at least one of:

> permission to avoid an effect of an outcome of the determined outcomes;

> a reduction in the predetermined number of rounds; or

> an increase in the final balance of winnings.

13. (Original)   The method of claim 11, further comprising:

applying the privilege to the game play at the time the privilege is obtained.

14. (Original)   The method of claim 11, further comprising:

> applying the privilege to the game play in response to a command from the player to do so.

15. (Original)   The method of claim 11, wherein the privilege has associated therewith at least one constraint.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the at least one constraint comprises at least one of:

> a predetermined number of rounds, from a round within which the privilege is obtained, within which the privilege must be applied;

> a predetermined number of game plays, from a game play within which the privilege is obtained, within which the privilege must be applied; or

> a predetermined period of time, from a time at which the privilege was obtained, within which the privilege must be applied.

17. (Original)   The method of claim 11, further comprising:

> storing an indication of the privilege with an identifier of the player, for future use by the player.

18. (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein adjusting the initial balance of winnings comprises:

determining, based on at least one of the determined outcomes, that adjusting the initial balance of winnings would result in a negative balance of winnings; and

setting the current balance of winnings to be zero.

19. (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein adjusting the initial balance of winnings comprises:

adjusting the initial balance of winnings such that the current balance of winnings is a fractional amount.

20. (Currently amended)   A method, comprising:

receiving, at via a gaming device, a wager for initiating a game play of a game,

wherein the game play comprises a predetermined amount of time during which consecutive rounds of the game are to be played;

establishing, via the gaming device in response to the wager, an initial balance of winnings,

wherein the initial balance of winnings is greater than the amount of the wager;

determining, via the gaming device, a number of outcomes during the predetermined amount of time, each of the outcomes corresponding to a respective round of the game;

adjusting, via the gaming device, the initial balance of winnings based on at least one of the determined outcomes, thereby determining a current balance of winnings,

wherein at least one of the outcomes causes the current balance of winnings to be less than the initial balance of winnings;

determining, via the gaming device at the end of a predetermined subset of the predetermined amount of time, a final balance of winnings based on the current balance of winnings at the time after the predetermined subset of the predetermined amount of time; and

providing, via the gaming device, the final balance of winnings to a player who initiated the game play.

21. (Original)   The method of claim 20, wherein the game play further comprises a minimum rate of play for the predetermined amount of time, such that the player must initiate rounds of the game at the minimum rate of play in order to qualify for the final balance of winnings.

22. (Original)   The method of claim 20, wherein the player is unable to cash out the final balance of winnings until after the predetermined amount of time ends.

23. (Original)   The method of claim 20, wherein providing the final balance of winnings comprises:

    adding the final balance of winnings to a credit meter balance of the gaming device.

24. (Original)   The method of claim 20, further comprising:

    establishing, based on the wager, a credit meter balance that is distinct from the initial balance of winnings.

25. (Original)   The method of claim 20, wherein the initial balance of winnings is established prior to any outcome being determined.

26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein adjusting the initial balance of winnings comprises:

    determining an outcome;
    determining an effect on the game play corresponding to the outcome; or
    applying the effect to the game play.

27. (Original)   The method of claim 26, wherein an effect on the game play comprises an effect on a current balance of winnings that corresponds to the outcome, and
wherein applying the effect to the game play comprises applying the effect to the current balance of winnings.

28. (Original)   The method of claim 26, further comprising:

accessing a database that stores a plurality of obtainable outcomes, each of the obtainable

outcomes corresponding to a respective effect on the game play.

29. (Original)   The method of claim 20, further comprising:

automatically initiating, during the predetermined amount of time, rounds of the game at a

predetermined rate.

30. (Original)   The method of claim 20, wherein determining a number of outcomes

comprises:

receiving, from the player, a command to initiate a round of the game; and

determining an outcome in response to the command.

31. (Original)   The method of claim 20, wherein at least one of the determined outcomes

comprises an outcome that grants a privilege to the player.

32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein the privilege comprises at least one

of:

permission to avoid an effect of an outcome of the determined outcomes;

a reduction in the predetermined amount of time; or

an increase in the final balance of winnings.

33. (Original)   The method of claim 31, further comprising:

applying the privilege to the game play at the time the privilege is obtained.

34. (Original)   The method of claim 31, further comprising:

applying the privilege to the game play in response to a command from the player to do so.

35. (Original)   The method of claim 31, wherein the privilege has associated therewith at

least one constraint.

36. (Previously presented) The method of claim 35, wherein the at least one constraint comprises at least one of:

a predetermined number of rounds, from a round within which the privilege is obtained, within which the privilege must be applied;

a predetermined number of game plays, from a game play within which the privilege is obtained, within which the privilege must be applied; or

a predetermined period of time, from a time at which the privilege was obtained, within which the privilege must be applied.

37. (Original)   The method of claim 31, further comprising:

storing an indication of the privilege with an identifier of the player, for future use by the player.

38. (Original)   The method of claim 20, wherein adjusting the initial balance of winnings comprises:

determining, based on at least one of the determined outcomes, that adjusting the initial balance of winnings would result in a negative balance of winnings; and

setting the current balance of winnings to be zero.

39. (Original)   The method of claim 20, wherein adjusting the initial balance of winnings comprises:

adjusting the initial balance of winnings such that the current balance of winnings is a fractional amount.

40. (Currently amended)   A method, comprising:

establishing, at the initiation of a game play at a gaming device, an initial value of a prize <u>via the gaming device,</u>

wherein the game play ends once at least one of a predetermined number of rounds of the game are completed and a predetermined amount of time has passed;

determining<u>, via the gaming device,</u> a series of outcomes for the game play, each respective outcome corresponding to a round of the game play;

adjusting<u>, via the gaming device,</u> the initial value of the prize based on the determined outcomes, thereby determining a current value of the prize,

wherein at least one of the determined outcomes causes the current value of the prize to be less than the initial value of the prize;

determining, <u>via the gaming device</u> once the game play ends, a final value of the prize; and

outputting the prize of the final value to a player.

41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 40, wherein the prize comprises at least one of:

currency;

alternate currency;

a product; or ~~and~~

a service.

42. (Currently amended)   A method, comprising:

establishing, ~~at~~ <u>via</u> a gaming device, an initial value of a prize that is distinct from a balance of credits available to a player for wagering at the gaming device;

determining<u>, via the gaming device,</u> a series of outcomes;

adjusting the initial value of the prize after each of the outcomes, based on an effect associated with the outcome,

wherein at least one of the outcomes causes the final value of the prize to be less than the initial value of the prize;

determining<u>, via the gaming device,</u> that the current value of the prize is zero;

determining<u>, via the gaming device,</u> a number of outcomes that were determined before the current value of the prize reached zero; and

providing<u>, via the gaming device,</u> a reward to the player based on the number of outcomes.

43. (Currently amended)   A method, comprising:

receiving, at̶ via a gaming device, a wager for initiating a game play of a game,

    wherein the game play comprises a predetermined number of rounds of the game and the wager is an amount sufficient to pre-pay for the predetermined number of rounds;

establishing, via the gaming device and in response to the wager and prior to any outcome being determined, an initial balance of winnings,

    wherein the initial balance of winnings is greater than the amount of the wager;

establishing, via the gaming device and based on the wager, a credit meter balance that is distinct from the initial balance of winnings;

determining, via the gaming device, a predetermined number of outcomes, the predetermined number of outcomes comprising at least one respective outcome for each of the predetermined number of rounds;

    wherein at least one of the outcomes of the predetermined number of outcomes comprises an outcome that grants a privilege to the player;

    wherein the privilege comprises at least one of:

        permission to avoid an effect of an outcome of the determined outcomes;

        a reduction in the predetermined number of rounds; and

        an increase in the final balance of winnings;

    wherein the privilege is applied to the game play at the time the privilege is obtained and in response to a command from the player to do so;

    wherein the privilege has associated therewith at least one constraint;

        wherein the at least one constraint comprises at least one of:

            a predetermined number of rounds, from a round within which the privilege is obtained, within which the privilege must be applied;

            a predetermined number of game plays, from a game play within which the privilege is obtained, within which the privilege must be applied; or

            a predetermined period of time, from a time at which the privilege was obtained, within which the privilege must be applied;

storing, via the gaming device, an indication of the privilege with an identifier of the player, for future use by the player;

determining, <u>via the gaming device and </u>based on a command received from the player,

whether to automatically initiate each round of the predetermined rounds, without further input

to do so from the player;

adjusting, <u>via the gaming device,</u> the initial balance of winnings based on at least one of the

determined outcomes, thereby determining a current balance of winnings,

wherein at least one of the outcomes causes the current balance of winnings to be

less than the initial balance of winnings;

wherein adjusting the initial balance of winnings comprises:

accessing a database that stores a plurality of obtainable outcomes, each of

the obtainable outcomes corresponding to a respective effect on the game play;

determining an outcome of the predetermined number of outcomes;

determining an effect on the game play corresponding to the outcome;

applying the effect to the game play; and

adjusting the initial balance of winnings such that the current balance of

winnings is a fractional amount;

determining, <u>via the gaming device and </u>after the predetermined number of rounds has been

concluded, a final balance of winnings; and

providing, <u>via the gaming device,</u> the final balance of winnings to a player who initiated the

game play;

wherein the player is unable to cash out the current balance of winnings until after

the predetermined number of rounds has been concluded; and

wherein providing the final balance of winnings comprises adding the final balance

of winnings to a credit meter balance of the gaming device.

44. (Currently amended)   A method, comprising:

    receiving, ~~at~~ <u>via</u> a gaming device, a wager for initiating a game play of a game,

        wherein the game play comprises a predetermined amount of time during which consecutive rounds of the game are to be played;

    establishing, <u>via the gaming device and</u> in response to the wager, an initial balance of winnings,

        wherein the initial balance of winnings is greater than the amount of the wager;

    determining<u>, via the gaming device,</u> a number of outcomes during the predetermined amount of time, each of the outcomes corresponding to a respective round of the game;

    adjusting<u>, via the gaming device,</u> the initial balance of winnings based on at least one of the determined outcomes, thereby determining a current balance of winnings,

        wherein at least one of the outcomes causes the current balance of winnings to be less than the initial balance of winnings;

    determining, <u>via the gaming device and</u> at the end of the predetermined amount of time, a final balance of winnings; and

    providing<u>, via the gaming device,</u> the final balance of winnings to a player who initiated the game play;

    wherein the game play further comprises a minimum rate of play for the predetermined amount of time, such that the player must initiate rounds of the game at the minimum rate of play in order to qualify for the final balance of winnings; wherein the player is unable to cash out the final balance of winnings until after the predetermined amount of time ends; and

    wherein at least one of the determined outcomes comprises an outcome that grants a privilege to the player; wherein the privilege comprises at least one of:

        permission to avoid an effect of an outcome of the determined outcomes;

        a reduction in the predetermined amount of time; and

        an increase in the final balance of winnings.